

DETAILED ACTION

1. In view of the Appeal Brief filed on February 29, 2008, PROSECUTION IS HEREBY REOPENED. A new non-Office Action is set forth below.

To avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:

(1) file a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this Office action is non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this Office action is final); or,

(2) initiate a new appeal by filing a notice of appeal under 37 CFR 41.31 followed by an appeal brief under 37 CFR 41.37. The previously paid notice of appeal fee and appeal brief fee can be applied to the new appeal. If, however, the appeal fees set forth in 37 CFR 41.20 have been increased since they were previously paid, then appellant must pay the difference between the increased fees and the amount previously paid.

/David P. Bryant/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3726

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-4 and 6-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hunte (US 4,937,499).

Re claim 1: Hunte discloses providing an electrical source (left hand side of 156 in Fig. 5; see Response to arguments in the final Office Action dated 1/30/04); connecting said electrical source to an equalizer hub (right hand side of 156 in Fig. 5; see Response to arguments in the final Office Action dated 1/30/04); and connecting said equalizer hub to one or more light fixtures (150a, 150b, 150c).

Re claim 2: Hunte discloses connecting said electrical source to a transformer (156) and connecting said transformer to said equalizer hub (156 is connected to right hand side of 156 in Fig. 5; see Response to arguments in the final Office Action dated 1/30/04).

Re claim 3: Hunte discloses connecting a homerun wire (a top wire located below “TRP-12K” from 156) from said transformer (156) to said equalizer hub.

Re claim 4: Hunte discloses connecting the equalizer hub to a wire lead (LP1, LP2, LP3) on each of the one or more light fixtures (150a, 150b, 150c).

Re claim 6: Hunte discloses connecting said electrical source to two or more connectors (160, 166, 180) contained in said equalizer hub.

Re claim 7: Hunte discloses connecting the connectors to said one or more light fixtures (150a, 150b, 150c).

Re claim 8: Hunte discloses providing an electrical source (left hand side of 156 in Fig. 5; see Response to arguments in the final Office Action dated 1/30/04); connecting said electrical source to a transformer (156); connecting said transformer to two or more connectors (160, 180, 170) contained in an equalizer hub; and connecting said connectors to each of one or more wire leads (162), said wire leads connected to one or more light fixtures (150a, 150b, 150c).

Re claim 9: Hunte discloses connecting a homerun wire from said transformer to said two or more connectors (CR1, CR2).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 5, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hunte (US 4,937,499) in view of Eisenbraun (US 5,113,325).

Hunte teaches the invention as described with respect to claims 1-4 and 6-9. Hunte fails to disclose the wire leads on each of said light fixtures are of uniform length.

Eisenbraun discloses that the wire leads on each of said light fixtures (20) are of uniform length (col. 2, lines 19-23).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Hunte by providing the wire leads on each of said light fixtures are of uniform length to the Hunte's lighting system, as taught by Eisenbraun, for the purpose of providing a uniform voltage drop to each light fixture.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 11 has been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., an electrical

hub designed to allow multiple connections to a single home run wire as claimed and described in Appellant's invention; connecting one or more light fixtures separately to the home run wire coming from the transformer; the equalizer hub claimed in the application provides a common connection point which facilitates the addition and/or removal of light fixtures without disrupting the uniformity in voltage to other light fixtures . . . found in the equalizer hub; a direct connection between the light fixtures and a common connection point which facilitates the addition and/or removal of light fixtures without disrupting the uniformity in voltage to the other light fixtures; light fixtures directly coupled to the home run wire without intervening connections) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

Conclusion

7. Please provide reference numerals (either in parentheses next to the claimed limitation or in a table format with one column listing the claimed limitation and another column listing corresponding reference numerals in the remark section of the response to the Office Action) to all the claimed limitations as well as support in the disclosure for better clarity (optional). Applicants are duly reminded that a full and proper response to this Office Action that includes any amendment to the claims and specification of the application as originally filed requires that the applicant point out the support for any amendment made to the disclosure, including the claims. See 37 CFR 1.111 and MPEP 2163.06.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rick K. Chang whose telephone number is (571) 272-4564. The examiner can normally be reached on 5:30 AM to 1:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David P. Bryant can be reached on (571) 272-4526. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Rick K. Chang/
Primary Examiner, A.U. 3726

RC
June 12, 2008